

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ARA-16 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

CCO-00 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-19 OMB-01 PRS-01 /099 R

DRAFTED BY PM/STERN/OC

APPROVED BY PM/SEYMOUR WEISS

NEA - MR. DAVIES - DRAFT

NEA/RA - COL MUNDY - DRAFT

NEA/ARP - BWRAMPPELMETER - DRAFT

NEA/ARP QLUMSDEN - DRAFT

DOD/ISA - MCALDWELL (SUBSTANCE)

PM/SAS - DFARNHAM-DRAFT

ARA - RJ BLOOMFIELD -DRAFT

S/S:SRGAMMON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USINT DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

INFO USDEL ALEXANDRIA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 092117

TOSEC 222

E.O. 11652

TAGS: MASS, XX

SUBJECT: SALE OF TOW MISSILES SYSTEM

FOR UNDER SECRETARY SISCO FROM WEISS

PROBLEM--SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, YOU REQUESTED US TO MAKE AN ANALYSIS OF THE REQUEST FOR TOW MISSILES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA. SINCE THAT TIME WE HAVE RECEIVED REQUESTS FROM KUWAIT AND CHILE, AS WELL AS EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FROM MANY OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS COLOMBIA AND PERU. THIS LIST WHICH NOW CONSISTS OF 15 COUNTRIES (INCLUDING REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL TOWS FROM COUNTRIES PREV-

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IOUSLY SUPPLIED) INCREASES WITH EVERY PASSING MONTH AND

THE ISSUE WHICH WE WISH TO PLACE BEFORE YOU THEREFORE CONCERNS NOT ONLY OUR RESPONSE TO SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT, BUT OUR GENERAL POSITION ON ALL REQUESTS.

BACKGROUND--1. AS YOU KNOW, THIS BUREAU HAS IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS CAUTIONED, ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, AGAINST THE SALE OF "LATEST" WEAPON SYSTEMS FOR A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT REASONS (E.G. PROLIFERATION, DANGER OF FALLING INTO UNFRIENDLY HANDS, ETC). THE TOW GUIDED MISSILE SYSTEM RAISES THE PROBLEM OF DEFICITS IN OUR OWN MILITARY INVENTORY.

2. THE TOW GUIDED MISSILE SYSTEM WAS DEVELOPED AS A CREW-SERVED, HIGHLY MOBILE, HEAVY ASSAULT WEAPON. THE SYSTEM CAN BE MOUNTED IN A GROUND IMPLACEMENT, ON A VEHICLE SUCH AS A TANK OR APC, OR ON AN AIRCRAFT SUCH AS A COBRA HELICOPTER. THE AUTOMATIC TRACKING CONTROL CAPABILITIES OF THE SYSTEM PROVIDE FOR A HIGH PROBABILITY OF A FIRST-ROUND HIT. STEERING CORRECTION COMMANDS ARE TRANSMITTED FROM THE OPTICAL GUIDANCE SET THROUGH THE COMMAND-LINK WIRES TO CORRECT IN-FLIGHT DEVIATIONS. THE WARHEAD CONSISTS OF A HEAVY ANTITANK PROJECTILE.

3. CURRENTLY, THERE IS A SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF THE TOW IN OUR MILITARY INVENTORY. THE ARMY HAS INITIATED ACTION TO INCREASE TOW LAUNCHER AND MISSILE PRODUCTION. UNDER THIS PROGRAM ACTIVE ARMY REQUIREMENTS WILL BE MET IN MID-FY 76. BASED ON US ARMY REQUIREMENTS AND PRIOR INTERNATIONAL SALES, NO ADDITIONAL SALES CAN BE DELIVERED UNTIL FY 77 WITHOUT DIVERSION OF US ARMY ASSETS AND FROM SALES ALREADY UNDER CONTRACT. ARMY HAS PLANS TO INCREASE PRODUCTION AND IS REVIEWING THE DESIRABILITY OF A SECOND PRODUCTION SOURCE OR OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO FURTHER ACCELERATE PRODUCTION.

4. IN THE MIDDLE EAST WE HAVE ALREADY PROVIDED 81 TOW LAUNCHERS AND 2,052 MISSILES TO ISRAEL (AN ADDITIONAL 239 LAUNCHERS AND 10,000 MISSILES HAVE BEEN REQUESTED). ALSO, WE HAVE PROVIDED 36 TOW LAUNCHERS AND 648 MISSILES TO JORDAN. IN LIGHT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WEAPONS

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SYSTEM IT HAS BEEN A HIGHLY DESIRED COMMODITY, ALTHOUGH THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT SOME OF THE REQUESTS ARE STIMULATED NOT ONLY BY MILITARY CONCERNS BUT AS A MATTER OF NATIONAL PRESTIGE.

5. THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ASKED BY DOD TO CONCUR ON AN URGENT BASIS IN THE SALE OF 50 TOW LAUNCHERS AND 1800 MISSILES FOR KUWAIT, AND 80 TOW LAUNCHERS AND 1500

MISSILES FOR THE SAUDI ARABIA ARMY. IN ADDITION, WE HAVE OFFERED TO PROVIDE 14 TOW LAUNCHERS AND 1,000 MISSILES TO THE SAUDI NATIONAL GUARD IN THE FY-75-76 TIMEFRAME. WHILE WE NEED TO RESPOND TO ALL OUTSTANDING REQUESTS, THOSE REQUESTS FROM THE ARAB COUNTRIES HAVE A DIRECT POLITICAL BEARING ON URGENT US INTERESTS IN THE AREA AND THEREFORE DESERVE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AT THIS TIME. WE DO

FEEL THAT EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE AT LEAST TO SLOW DOWN THE SALE AND SUBSEQUENT DELIVERY OF THIS NEW WEAPON SYSTEM UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE DEFENSE INVENTORY IS UP TO

THE DESIRED LEVEL.

6. DOD HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE TOW SYSTEM BE DELETED FROM THE LIST OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS, AS DEFINED BY THE CONTE AMENDMENT AND WE WILL INITIATE A STUDY ON THIS RECOMMENDATION IMMEDIATELY.

RECOMMENDATIONS (1) THAT THE KUWAITI REQUEST BE APPROVED WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT 3 LAUNCHERS AND 50 MISSILES BE DELIVERED WITHIN 90 DAYS OF YOUR APPROVAL; THEN 3 LAUNCHERS/50 MISSILES PER MONTH UNTIL A TOTAL OF 12 LAUNCHERS AND 150 MISSILES ARE DELIVERED. THE BALANCE (38 LAUNCHERS AND 1600 MISSILES) WOULD BE PROGRAMMED FOR DELIVERY IN FY 75. THIS DELIVERY SCHEDULE WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO ENABLE THE KUWAIT ARMY TO START A TRAINING PROGRAM IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

APPROVE: DISAPPROVE:

(2) (A) THAT THE REQUESTS FROM THE SAUDI ARABIA ARMY AND NATIONAL GUARD PROPOSING DELIVERY 26 MONTHS AFTER
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APPROVAL BE APPROVED.

APPROVE: DISAPPROVE:

(2) (B) ALTERNATIVELY, IF EARLIER DELIVERY TO SAUDI ARABIA BECOMES DESIRABLE, THAT A DELIVERY SCHEDULE COMPARABLE TO THAT PROPOSED FOR KUWAIT BE ESTABLISHED.

(WE CAN WORK OUT THE ALLOCATION BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE NATIONAL GUARD OF AVAILABLE LAUNCHERS AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME).

APPROVE: DISAPPROVE:

(3) THAT EACH PENDING AND FUTURE REQUEST BE STUDIED ON A

CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. IF THE DECISION IS MADE THAT A SALE SHOULD PROCEED IT WOULD BE LIMITED, AS IS IN THE CASE OF KUWAIT AND SAUDI ARABIA, TO MISSILES AND LAUNCHERS SUFFICIENT ONLY FOR TRAINING PURPOSES UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE DEFENSE INVENTORY HAS REACHED THE DESIRED LEVEL (UNLESS EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ARISE). WE WOULD CONTINUE TO ACCEPT REQUESTS FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTS, BUT WE WOULD INFORM THEM THAT ONLY A LIMITED SUPPLY IS AVAILABLE IN THE SHORT-RUN AND THAT THE FULL REQUEST COULD NOT BE

SATISFIED FOR PROBABLY ANOTHER TWO YEARS.

APPROVE: DISAPPROVE:

DOD, NEA AND ARA CONCUR IN THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS. AFTER YOU HAVE REACHED YOUR DECISIONS, WE WILL REQUEST DOD TO MAKE THEM KNOWN TO MAAG'S SO THAT ALL CONCERNED WILL BE FAMILIAR WITH THE US POSITION ON THIS MATTER.
RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, TOW MISSILES, MISSILES, MILITARY SALES, TOSEC 222
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE092117
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: STERN/OC
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740107-0489
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740573/aaaacnwp.tel
Line Count: 188
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN PM
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Aug-2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <14 JAN 2003 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SALE OF TOW MISSILES SYSTEM FOR UNDER SECRETARY SISCO FROM WEISS
TAGS: MASS, XX, SA
To: DAMASCUS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005